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the fact the President of the United States was refused information he requested about our national defense—as late as last fall. I may add that as a Senator he was completely entitled to the information in question, even though apparently there were in the country at that time some misguided people who apparently felt he would not be elected, because as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee he had complete access to information on our own military status and the reports of the Central Intelligence Agency, which briefs the Foreign Relations Committee, and makes up the national intelligence estimates of the United States.

I regret that today there are some who appear to be making a major partisan matter of this affair, as we go into 4 years under the leadership of our great new President, just elected by the people of the United States. To those who would try to make a partisan matter out of a difference of opinion on the part of some newspapermen, let me point out the partisanship of those who, last fall, made it necessary for the President to spend more time, after he was elected, in obtaining the facts about the defense of the United States—facts he went out of his way to try to obtain before his election.

MR. JACKSON. Mr. President, I do not have available to me the transcript of what was said at the Defense Department background press briefing. However, I believe it would be helpful to the American people to keep in mind certain distinctions in terminology.

First, if we are talking about a missile gap, and we define it to mean the difference in the total number of missiles that we have operational or launching pads, as compared with what the Soviets have, the answer is clear, without dispute, that the Soviets have more operational intercontinental ballistic missiles than we have.

Second, if we are talking about a missile deterrent, the argument is over the question, Will our overall retaliatory force, including our long-range bomber force, offset the Soviet advantage in operational intercontinental ballistic missiles?

Thinking at the present time—I have always said this—is that our long-range bomber force, with the alert bases abroad, does now offset the numerical advantage which the Soviets have in operational intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Will this situation have changed in the year and what it will be next year and the year after?

I remember vividly the testimony of General Schriever before the Presidential Commission within the last year or so. He said, in effect, there is nothing you can do now to overcome the numerical advantage the Soviets have in ICBMs, because we did not order them

when we should have ordered them. At that time, in 1957, we had 142 of them.

At that time, in 1957, we had 142 of them. We have been increasing at this rate, but we are still at this point of the year, and we are still at that point of the year, and that

Mr. SYMINGTON. Mr. President, in reply to my friend from Illinois, let me emphasize that the first message the President sent to Congress called for acceleration of the missile program—acceleration—specifically—of specific missile programs, and also acceleration of the modernity and mobility of the U.S. Army. Now again the President omitted in no uncertain terms the nature of these press assertions. I have already read that clarification into the record. It would be redundant to do it again.

The distinguished minority leader has referred to the Democratic platform. Again may I refer to most unfortunate circumstances. After the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts had been nominated by his party, when he went to find out information which would make it possible, after his election, for him to reach decisions with greater certainty, the previous administration nevertheless carefully planned and refrained from giving him the information requested.

Mr. President, I must say, although there may be some absence of caution as to exactly what I am not sure for those reasons, I do not believe it is justifiable to accept the request of the distinguished minority leader that

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